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ABSTRACT

A pilot study investigated the effect of gender on student evaluations of teachers in the field of mass communication, gauging any effects and interactions between instructor gender and student gender; whether female instructors are at a disadvantage; and whether type of course has an impact. Sixty-seven students in four upper-level mass communication classes taught by two professors completed questionnaires. Results indicated: (1) no significant difference for the gender of instructor, category of course, or gender of student; (2) the female instructor was rated significantly higher on the masculine characteristics than the male instructor (a reversal of the expected response); (3) male students consistently rated the male instructor higher than did the female students (in the "objective" question), while female students consistently rated the female instructor higher on the "objective" index than the male students did. Findings further suggest the importance of personality as a variable that needs to be controlled for in such studies. (Four tables of data and 23 references are included.) (SR)

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The Effect of Gender on Course Evaluations in Mass Communications: A Pilot Study

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The Effect of Gender on Course Evaluations in Mass Communications: A Pilot Study

Introduction

Student evaluations remain a widely used method of assessing courses and the quality of teaching in higher education, yet much controversy surrounds the student teaching evaluation as a measurement of teaching effectiveness. One aspect of this controversy deals with the effect gender has on student evaluations. Does the gender of the instructor affect results on student evaluation instruments? Are female instructors at a disadvantage in the student evaluation process? This pilot study was designed to answer these and a number of other questions in the field of mass communication, a previously unexamined area of investigation.

Researchers were particularly interested in gauging any effects and interactions between the gender of the instructor and the gender of the student in course evaluations. Researchers also wanted to ascertain whether the type of course an instructor teaches has an impact on the gender-based perceptions of the students who evaluate that instructor. To that end, two types of mass communication courses, the equipment-intensive production course and the traditional lecture course, were used in the pilot study.

Literature Review

In retention, tenure, promotion and merit decisions, teaching performance remains an important consideration. How to measure

and evaluate teaching effectiveness has long been debated in a variety of disciplines.[1] A recent survey of 453 department heads[2] illustrates what has become the standard for evaluating teaching. According to that study, the input with the greatest weight in determining teaching effectiveness was the chair's evaluation. Tied for second were colleagues' opinions and systematic student ratings.

Of these three, student ratings are often accepted at face value without thought of factors--quite apart from teaching performance--that might influence student responses. Recent research has explored any number of variables affecting the ratings.[3]

Gender has been one of the factors examined in determining if student ratings are valid[4] measures of teaching performance. In the

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[1]William E. Cashin, "Idea Paper No. 21: Defining and Evaluating College Teaching," Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development, September 1988; R.A. Arreola, "Defining and Evaluating the Elements of Teaching," Proceedings of Academic Chairpersons: Evaluating Faculty, Students, and Programs (Manhattan: Kansas State U, 1989) 1-14.

[2]J.A. Centra, How Universities Evaluate Faculty Performance: A Survey of Department Heads (Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, 1977).

[3]K.A. Feldman, "Seniority and Experience of College Teachers as Related to Evaluations They Receive from Students," Research in Higher Education 18 (1983): 3-124; K.A. Feldman, "The Perceived Instructional Effectiveness of College Teachers as Related to Their Personality and Attitudinal Characteristics: A Review and Synthesis," Research in Higher Education 24 (1986): 129-213; H.W. Marsh, "Students' Evaluations of University Teaching: Dimensionality, Reliability, Validity, Potential Biases and Utility," Journal of Educational Psychology 76 (1984): 707-754; H.W. Marsh and J.E. Ware, "Effects of Expressiveness, Content Coverage and Incentive on Multidimensional Student Rating Scales: New Interpretations of the Dr. Fox Effect," Journal of Educational Psychology 74 (1982): 1126-34.

[4]Validity here is defined as follows: "Does the test measure what is supposed to?" See William E. Cashin, "Idea Paper No. 20. Student Ratings of Teachings: A Summary of the Research," Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development (Manhattan: Kansas State U, September 1989).

course of the research, questions of bias[5] have surfaced. While the research is not conclusive, a large number of studies have found that the gender of the instructor may negatively impact student ratings or, at least, influence results.

A portion of this literature explores the interaction of student gender and instructor gender. In general, these studies have found that the male instructor was rated higher than the woman teacher.

Kierstead, D'Agostino and Dill, for example, found that both male and female students consistently rated their woman instructor lower than the man teacher. The respondents of both genders expected female instructors to fulfill a different standard of behavior than their male teachers, concluded the researchers. "If female instructors want to obtain high student ratings, they must be not only highly competent with regard to factors directly related to teaching but also careful to act in accordance with traditional sex role expectations," the researchers explained. "In particular, our results indicate that male and female instructors will earn equal SRIs [Student Rating Instruments] for equal professional work only if the women also display stereotypically feminine behavior."[6] This negative rating of female instructors by students of both genders tended to support earlier studies.[7]

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[5]Factors which negatively or positively impact on the results of the instrument. See Marsh 707-54.

[6]Diane Kierstead, Patti D'Agostino, and Heidi Dill, "Sex Role Stereotyping of College Professors: Bias in Students' Ratings of Instructors," Journal of Educational Psychology 80 (1988): 342-44.

[7]J. Lombardo and M.E. Tocci, "Attribution of Positive and Negative Characteristics of Instructors," Perceptual and Motor Skills 48 (1979); D. Wilson and K.G. Jr., "Student Ratings of Instruction," Journal of Higher Education 47 (1976): 465-70.

Other studies have found that the male students were the ones to rate female instructors in a matter different from--and in a more harsh way than--the male teachers. Bernard, Keefauver, Elsworth and Naylor used an experimental design to test female and male student responses to teachers. In that study, the researchers found that male students were significantly less positive in their attitudes, expectations and evaluations of female teachers than female students, and the male students consistently rated male instructors more favorably than female instructors.[8]

That finding was reinforced by Basow and Silberg. In a study of more than 1,000 male and female college students of 16 male and female professors (matched for course, teaching experience and tenure), male students gave female professors significantly poorer ratings than the male instructors for each of six variables. Female students rated the female professor more negatively than male teachers in only three variables.[9]

Thus, this body of literature seems to suggest there is an interaction between gender of the student and gender of the instructor. And, according to this literature, women instructors are likely to be at a disadvantage.

Another body of research examines societal expectations of gender and how these affect students. According to this body of research, students come to expect certain behaviors from their

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[8]Michael E. Bernard, Linda W. Keefauver, Gerald Elsworth and Frank D. Naylor, "Sex-Role Behavior and Gender in Teacher-Student Evaluations," Journal of Educational Psychology 73 (1981): 681-95.

[9]Susan A. Basow and Nancy T. Silberg, "Student Evaluations of College Professors: Are Female and Male Professors Rated Differently?" Journal of Educational Psychology 79 (1987): 308-14.

female and male instructors. The behaviors expected flow from societal expectations of the genders. Findings suggest that students expect certain stereotypical behavior from their instructors. Female teachers are expected to conform to culturally accepted behaviors and those who fail to conform to those stereotypes often find negative student ratings. "Nurturing" and a close interpersonal relationship with students fall within this cultural expectation.

Bennett's study of 253 students illustrates such research. Bennett found that women instructors were perceived as warmer (a highly loaded female characteristic[10]) within the classroom. Yet students demanded a greater amount of interpersonal support and held women to a stricter standard of accessibility. While Bennett did not detect any direct gender biases in the formal students evaluations, she speculated that female faculty members were subject to "cultural conditioned gender stereotypes."[11]

That expectation for a higher degree of interpersonal contact from female instructors was also found by Cooper, Stewart and Gudykunst in their study. Interpersonal contact as a variable had far more importance in the student's judgment of female instructors than male instructors. In their conclusions, the authors also pointed to societal stereotypes "that women are caring and sensitive while men are competent," the authors concluded. "When evaluating

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[10]Sandra Lipsitz Bem, Bem Sex-Role Inventory: Professional Manual (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press Inc., 1981). This manual explains the newer, shorter form and elaborates on the original Bem Sex-Role Inventory, which was initially published in the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1974.

[11]S. Bennett, "Student Perceptions and Expectations for Male and Female Instructors: Evidence Relating to the Question of Gender Bias in Teaching Evaluation," Journal of Educational Psychology 74 (1982): 170-9.

instructors, students give greater significance to the type of interpersonal responses they receive from female instructors while giving greater significance to the accuracy of the grade they receive from male instructors."[12]

The concept of societal expectations might also help explain the findings of Bryant, Comisky, Crane and Zillman. Humor is not a characteristic traditionally associated with feminine behavior. This study found that when men used humor in the classroom, the behavior was positively rewarded in student evaluations. The male instructor's teaching style became positively related to appeal, delivery and teaching effectiveness. In contrast, when women used humor, that technique was associated with a loss of appeal.[13] The Bryant, Comisky, Crane and Zillmann study seems to lend credence to conclusions of other researchers who have argued that evaluations are tied to competence and feminine behavior from women instructors.

These findings, however, remain controversial--not because the research designs are faulty or the results are invalid, but because this remains a fairly new area of investigation. Other studies, while acknowledging culturally conditioned gender stereotypes, have not definitively show that this is reflected in student evaluations. Even

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[12]Pamela J. Cooper, Lea P. Stewart and William B. Gudykunst, "Relationship with Instructor and Other Variables Influencing Student Evaluations of Instruction," Communication Quarterly 30 (1982): 308-15.

[13]Jennings Bryan, Paul W. Comisky, Jon S. Crane, and Dolf Zillmann, "Relationship Between College Teachers' Use of Humor in the Classroom and Students' Evaluations of Their Teachers," Journal of Educational Psychology 72 (1980): 511-19.

Bennett could not detect direct gender biases although she detected differing student expectations of instructors--depending on gender.[14]

A similar point was made by Elmore and La Pointe. The two detected no interaction between the faculty member's gender and the student's gender and no differences between the mean ratings given male and female faculty by students. Yet, these researchers emphasized that many variables had been left uncontrolled in their study. These variables included matching for class size and instructor's rank.[15]

The conflicting nature of such research has led Cashin of the Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development to conclude that gender of instructor does not appear to be a factor in student evaluations.[16] Yet two years later, while still noting that gender showed "little or no correlation" in student evaluations, Cashin wrote, "if the instructor provides evidence of his or her self-report of these variables [including gender], or if you or others have such evidence, that evidence should be taken into consideration."[17]

In the journalism and mass communication field there are few studies examining gender as a factor in student evaluations.[18] Yet,

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[14]Bennett 170-9.

[15]Patricia B. Elmore and Karen A. LaPointe, "Effects of Teacher Sex and the Evaluation of College Instructors," Journal of Educational Psychology 66 (1974): 386-9.

[16]William E. Cashin, "Idea Paper No. 20."

[17]William E. Cashin, "Idea Paper No. 22: Student Ratings of Teaching: Recommendations for Use," Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development (Manhattan: Kansas State U, January 1990).

[18]This is not to say that the subject of student evaluations has not been studied in the journalism/mass communication field. For example, Jerry C. Hudson examined the relationship between the expected grade and student ratings in "Expected Grades Correlate with Evaluation of Teaching," Journalism Educator 44 (1989): 38-44.

the journalism and mass communication field seems to be an ideal area for such a study for several reasons. Current enrollment trends not withstanding, the journalism and mass communication professional field has traditionally been dominated by males.[19] Women instructors in journalism and mass communication on the college level still remain a minority. Currently, women represent only 26 percent of the full-time teaching faculty. [20] Journalism and mass communication also call for certain characteristics or talents which are not commonly associated with "feminine behavior." Certain production classes are technology and equipment intensive. Moreover, certain classes--particularly in reporting--require certain aggressive questioning and behaviors not commonly associated with feminine stereotypes.[21] Given the special characteristics of the journalism/mass communication educational discipline and given the lack of research in this area, the time seems right for at least a pilot study on student evaluation ratings in this field.

Methodology

Given the literature, which points to different expectations of male and female instructors and the lack of research in the mass

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[19]The only exception to this is the current employment situation in public relations. For recent statistics, see Labor Force Statistics Derived from the Current Population Survey, 1948-87, U.S. Department of Labor, Bulletin 2307 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1988): 764; see also "Women Men and Media: Next Steps for Journalism and Mass Communication Educators," special report, AEJMC, 1989.

[20]Linda Schamber, "Women in Mass Communication Education: Who is Teaching Tomorrow's Communicators," in Pamela J. Creedon, ed., Women in Mass Communication: Challenging Gender Values (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1989): 148.

[21]Bem.

communication field, this research project was designed as a pilot study to make a preliminary examination of the effect of gender on student evaluation ratings. In order to gauge this effect, the researchers used one of the most widely known and accepted instruments as the basis for this study's instrument, the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI). The BSRI is based on extensive examination of masculine and feminine culturally defined characteristics. [22] For instance, based on extensive testing, Bem has found that an item, or behavioral characteristic, such as that defined by the phrase "demonstrates leadership abilities" is highly loaded as a culturally desirable masculine trait. Similarly, the phrase "eager to soothe hurt feelings" was found through equally extensive testing to be a highly loaded item designating a culturally desirable feminine characteristic. Both of these phrases, along with other highly loaded items for both masculinity and femininity were used on the questionnaire. The literature shows that the BSRI has found its use across the curriculum.

In this study, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. Student ratings of a woman instructor on the objective portion of the questionnaire will be lower than the student ratings of a male instructor.

2. Student ratings of a woman instructor will be lower on the BSRI masculinity characteristics index than will those for the male instructor.

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[22] Bem 4.

3. Student ratings of a male instructor will be lower on the BSRI femininity characteristics index than will those for the female instructor.

4. Male students will rate male instructors higher on the objective portion of the questionnaire than they will female instructors.

5. Female students will rate both male and female instructors higher on the objective index than will male students.

A questionnaire was formed from the pool of the highest loaded BSRI items for masculinity and the highest loaded items for femininity. Statements from the pre-existing departmental evaluation form were used instead of filler questions, which are typically used with the BSRI. Since this is a pilot study and is aimed at a new area of gender evaluation emphasis, mass communication, the items selected from the BSRI pool were those that had potential for direct application to the mass communication classroom situation. For example, one item chosen was a highly loaded feminine characteristic, "eager to soothe hurt feelings," instead of another highly loaded feminine characteristic such as "affectionate."

The questionnaire was administered to students in four classes on a voluntary and confidential basis. The four classes, of 15 to 25 students each, were taught by two professors, one male and one female, both tenured and senior in rank at a midwestern university. Both were experienced teachers and both had taught these courses for a number of years.

In addition, courses were selected for similar subject matter. All classes were upper-level courses. One set of courses was

composed of production classes that were equipment intensive, calling on skills and behaviors not traditionally associated with femininity. These equipment-intensive production courses are similar to other equipment-intensive production courses typical in journalism and mass communication. The other set of classes was composed of traditional lecture-discussion classes that, in this particular matching, happened to cover historical topics.

The students in both sets of courses comprised the population for this pilot study. Students in each of the classes participated voluntarily. All the students present on the day the questionnaire was administered responded, for a total population of 67 students. Because of limited access to equipment, the production courses had smaller enrollments than did the traditional lecture classes. In the production class taught by the male instructor, 13 students participated; in the male instructor's traditional lecture class, 23 students participated. In the female instructor's production course, 13 students participated; in her traditional course, 18 students participated. Slightly more male students than female students participated: 24 of the male instructor's 36 students were male; 19 of the female instructor's 31 students were male. The total male student population was 43 out of the total population of 67, or 64.2%. The subjects were divided into various groups; the four classes were divided by type of class, the students were divided by gender and the instructors were indicated by gender.

The questionnaire was administered by one of the researchers to each class within a two-week time span in the middle of the

semester. The instructor was not present when the students filled out the questionnaire.

Each student was asked to respond on the Likert scale as to his or her degree of agreement with each of 15 statements pertaining to the instructor in that classroom situation. Five of the items were defined as feminine and five as masculine, according to Bem. The other five were standard questions from the departmental evaluation, hereafter referred to as the objective portion of the evaluation. Three indexes were formed by summing the five items in each category. In addition, students provided demographic information so an interaction by gender could be gauged. The students coded their responses on computerized answer sheets.

These answer sheets were entered into the computer and analyzed using SPSS. It was recognized that by using only one male and only one female instructor, the results might not be conclusive; but the authors felt that as a pilot study such could yield significant results in this area.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses on the relationships among independent variables and dependent variables. The independent variables were the gender of the student, gender of the instructor and the type of course (production or traditional). This produced a 2x2x2 factoral design. A separate analysis of variance was run for each of the three indexes.

Results

Results of the analysis of variance for the index formed by the objective evaluation questions is reported in Table 1. No statistically significant difference was observed for the gender of the instructor, category of the course or gender of student. There was no significant difference observed due to the interaction of these independent variables (see Table 1).

Table 1

Analysis of Variance of the Objective Index Items

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	Sig of F
Main effects	12.195	3	4.065	.450	.718
Gender of Instructor	5.741	1	5.741	.635	.429
Category of Class	.574	1	.574	.063	.802
Gender of Student	4.738	1	4.738	.524	.472
2-Way Interactions	18.255	3	6.085	.673	.572
Gender of Instructor and Category	.144	1	.144	.016	.900
Gender of Instructor and Gender of Student	17.497	1	17.497	1.936	.169
Category and gender of Student	.229	1	.229	.025	.874
3-Way Interactions	3.847	1	3.847	.426	.517
Gender of teacher, Category of Class and Gender of Student	3.847	1	3.847	.426	.517
Explained	34.296	7	4.899	.542	.799
Residual	524.189	58	9.038		
Total	558.485	65	8.592		

The first hypothesis: Student ratings of a woman instructor on the objective portion of the questionnaire will be lower than the

student ratings of a male instructor. There was no support for this hypothesis.

Table 2 shows an analysis of variance for the index constructed from the items of the BSRI masculine characteristics. A significant difference was observed for the factor of the gender of instructor. However, the findings were almost exactly the reverse of what was expected. The female instructor rated significantly higher on the masculine characteristics than the male instructor. There was no significant difference observed for the other two factors or their interaction.(see Table 2).

Table 2

Analysis of Variance of the Masculinity Index Items

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	Sig of F
Main effects	584.706	3	194.902	24.069	.000
Gender of Instructor	554.131	1	554.131	68.431	.000
Category of Class	20.354	1	20.354	2.514	.118
Gender of Student	.297	1	.297	.037	.849
2-Way Interactions	3.376	3	1.125	.139	.936
Gender of Instructor and Category	.132	1	.132	.016	.899
Gender of Instructor and Gender of Student	2.708	1	2.708	.334	.565
Category and gender of Student	.600	1	.600	.074	.786
3-Way Interactions	.024	1	.024	.003	.956
Gender of teacher, Category of Class and Gender of Student	.024	1	.024	.003	.956
Explained	588.106	7	84.015	10.375	.000
Residual	469.667	58	8.098		
Total	1057.773	65	16.273		

With regard to the second hypothesis: Student ratings of a woman instructor will be lower on the BSRI masculinity characteristics index than will those for the male instructor. The findings of this pilot study did not support this hypothesis. According to the results of the ANOVA of gender of instructor, the mean on the masculinity index was 13.81 for the male instructor, and the mean for the index for the female instructor was 7.93. "Strongly agree" was given the value of 1, so that the female teacher was rated higher than the male teacher on the index of masculine characteristics. Therefore, there was a difference, but the opposite of what was expected.

Table 3 shows the results of the analysis of variance of the index formed by the items loaded high on the BSRI index for femininity characteristics. No significant difference was observed for the major effects of gender of teacher, category of class or gender of student; no main effects were observed for the interaction (see Table 3).

Table 3

Analysis of Variance of Femininity Index Items

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	Sig of F
Main effects	29.290	3	9.763	.722	.543
Gender of Instructor	9.080	1	9.080	.672	.416
Category of Class	18.057	1	18.057	1.336	.252
Gender of Student	.398	1	.398	.029	.864
2-Way Interactions	11.699	3	3.900	.289	.833
Gender of Instructor and Category	2.294	1	2.294	.170	.682
Gender of Instructor and Gender of Student	7.213	1	7.213	.543	.468

Category and gender of Student	2.891	1	2.891	.214	.645
3-Way Interactions	26.897	1	26.897	1.990	.164
Gender of teacher, Category of Class and Gender of Student	26.897	1	26.897	1.990	.164
Explained	67.887	7	9.698	.718	.657
Residual	783.886	58	13.515		
Total	851.773	65	13.104		

Regarding the third hypothesis: Student ratings of a male instructor will be lower on the BSRI femininity characteristics index than will those for the female instructor. This pilot study's findings did not support this hypothesis.

With regard to the fourth hypothesis: Male students will rate male instructors higher on the objective portion of the questionnaire than they will female instructors. Table 1, which shows the results of the main effects, does not show a statistically significant interaction effect between the gender of the instructor and the gender of the student (see Table 1). However, a level of p= .169 encourages a statement-by-statement look at the breakdown of the objective index (see Table 4), which shows, by the mean of the responses, that the male students consistently rated the male instructor better than the female students rated the male instructor.

In each of the statements, "Strongly Agree" was given the value of 1 and "Strongly Disagree" was given the value of 5. Therefore, the lower the score the better the rating. The mean is designated for each segment of the population, by gender. In four out of the five statements on the objective index, it was demonstrated that the male students rated the male instructor more favorably than the female students did. Only on one statement, the statement that

"The Instructor creates a climate that facilitates learning," did the male students not rate the male instructor as high as the female students did.

Table 4

Breakdown of the Items in the Objective Index

1. Statement: In the classroom, the instructor appears to be concerned about the quality of his/her teaching.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
For Entire Population	2.0448	.9118
Male Instructor	2.2500	.9063
Male Students	2.1250	.6797
Female Students	2.5000	1.2432
Female Instructor	1.8065	.8725
Male Students	1.8421	.8342
Female Students	1.7500	.9653
Total Cases = 67		

2. Statement: The instructor clearly stated the course goals, grading criteria and assignment dates.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
For Entire Population	2.1940	1.0186
Male Instructor	1.7778	.6808
Male Students	1.7500	.6079
Female Students	1.8333	.8348
Female Instructor	2.6774	1.1369
Male Students	2.7368	1.0976
Female Students	2.5833	1.2401
Total Cases = 67		

3. Statement: In the classroom, the instructor demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the subject under study in this course.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
For Entire Population	1.7164	.8313
Male Instructor	1.9722	.9098
Male Students	1.9167	.8805
Female Students	2.0833	.9962
Female Instructor	1.4194	.6204
Male Students	1.6316	.6840

Female Students	1.0833	.2887
Total Cases = 67		

4. Statement: The instructor creates a climate that facilitates learning.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
For Entire Population	2.1212	.7954
Male Instructor	2.3333	.8281
Male Students	2.4583	.8836
Female Students	2.0833	.6686
Female Instructor	1.8667	.6814
Male Students	2.0556	.7254
Female Students	1.5833	.5149
Total Cases = 67		

5. Statement: In the classroom, the instructor appears to be sensitive to the needs and interests of the students.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
For Entire Population	2.4328	1.0184
Male Instructor	2.4722	.9706
Male Students	2.4167	.8297
Female Students	2.5833	1.2401
Female Instructor	2.3871	1.0856
Male Students	2.5263	1.2188
Female Students	2.1667	.8348
Total Cases = 67		

With regard to the fifth hypothesis: Female students will rate both male and female instructors higher on the objective index than will male students. There was no significant difference for the main effect of sex for the ANOVA on the objective index (see Table 1). However, the female students consistently rated the female instructor higher on the objective index than the male students did (see Table 4). The statement-by statement breakdown shows that, while the female students did not rate the male instructor as high as male students did, they did in every case rate the female instructor higher than the male students did. Although at this point in the

research neither the fourth nor the fifth hypothesis is supported by statistically significant results, the consistency of same-gender responses suggests that there may be an interaction between genders, which is a subject for further research.

Discussion

While the findings of this pilot study did not support all the hypotheses, significant results were gathered, along with high correlations and important areas for further research.

The findings in hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 illustrate certain elements that have been suggested in other student evaluation studies. The findings suggest the importance of personality as a variable that needs to be controlled for, particularly in the pairing of instructors. This study matched classes by type, size and level; it matched instructors by level of tenure and experience in teaching the course. However, it failed to match for personality. In this particular instance, personality of the instructor may have been an important factor.

The female instructor in this study has a strong, dominating and expressive personality. The male instructor, by contrast, is a more soft-spoken individual. This pilot study involved only these two instructors. Thus, what was found may not necessarily be a true representation of gender-based differences in the student ratings. Rather, it may be a clearer example of what has been called in academic studies the "Dr. Fox effect." In such studies, researchers have found that an expressive instructor -- in the case of a female --

will receive higher student evaluations.[23] Thus the difference -- or the lack of difference -- in these particular items may have more to do with personality than gender. As this study is expanded, personality of the instructor will certainly become a factor that will be matched, in addition to the other areas.

From the perspective of gender-based research, the findings in hypotheses 4 and 5 seem to be the most interesting. Even though these findings may not be statistically significant, they do suggest important insights. In all but one instance in the so-called objective questions, the male students consistently rated the male instructor higher than did the female students. Even though the female instructor did not rate as highly on the index of desirable feminine characteristics as the male instructor did, she was rated better on the objective statements. Indeed, the high ratings on the objective portion for the female instructor emanated from the substantially higher ratings she received from the female students on each of the objective statements. Those findings -- while not large enough to be significantly significant -- seem to lend support to the findings of Basow and Silberg and others with regard to the interaction of the gender on student ratings. As the researchers continue this work with other male and female instructors in other institutions, they will continue to examine this aspect of same-gender preference.

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[23] D.H. Naftulin, J.E. Ware, and F.A. Donolly, "The Doctor Fox Lecture: A Paradigm of Educational Seduction." Journal of Medical Education 48 (1973): 630-35+; H.W. Marsh and J.E. Ware, "Effects of Expressiveness, Content Coverage and Incentive on Multidimensional Student Rating Scales: New Interpretations of the Dr. Fox Effect," Journal of Educational Psychology 74 (1982): 126-34.

This pilot study calls for further research on the effect of gender and the evaluation of instructors in mass communication. The study also calls for an attempt to match instructors, controlling for personality or degree of expressiveness, in the classroom. That represents a difficult trait to define and measure. Nonetheless, the Dr. Fox effect can sway the findings, as this study seems to suggest. Thus, in order to get a true gauge of gender-based differences, some control for expressiveness must be made.

This pilot study suggests the usefulness of Bem's BSRI in gender-based examination of student evaluations in the mass communication classroom. At the same time, it points out that, in addition, expressiveness of the instructor in the classroom must be controlled for, in order to get an accurate assessment of gender-based evaluation. With the important implications for journalism and mass communication education that this research suggests, this study calls for more to be done in the area of gender-based evaluation research.